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**Burghers of the Privileged Market Town of Eger  
in the 18-19th Century\***

Pro&Contra

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## Introduction

This essay endeavors to describe the social composition of the burghers of the town of Eger during the period when estate society was in decline, in doing so it offers a socio-historical analysis of an urban government in transition at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. After providing a framework within which to understand the development of the urban hierarchy during the Reform Age as well as an outline of the composition of the local administration, an analysis is undertaken of the proportion of individuals who obtained suffrage after the Revolution of 1848. In other words, the distribution of those who obtained the right to vote under the old law due to their rights as burghers. This analysis reveals a correlation between the members of the urban administration and those who gained voting rights because of their burgher status. The study then turns its attention to the social composition of local government and the rate of personal continuity between 1848 and 1872. As the local administrative system and the suffrage legislation was regulated by different laws in 1848 and after the Compromise, I will attempt to establish the degree of continuity between the first circle of representatives in 1848 and those of 1872.

The second part of the essay addresses this continuity by focusing on the level of the family in order to examine how individuals could maintain their positions in local government taking the cases of family examples. These factors alongside others are crucial aspects in the examination of the parliamentary representatives. Despite parliamentary representation and electoral behavior having a broad and complex historiography<sup>1</sup>, researchers have paid scant attention to the local/urban politics of the second part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, national politics is built on urban politics and constituted by complex subsystems in urban areas. The electoral dimension, in addition, is a key aspect of urban politics and can determine local public policy and political behavior generally.

In the field of Hungarian social history studies, studying of the burghers during the decline of estate society has become one of the most emphasized fields of studies and come into focus over the past three decades. Recent historiography on the burghers is highly diversified and includes studies on their rights, their social description, and their

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<sup>1</sup> For the most recent academic literature in relation with this topic see József Pap, *Parliamentary Representatives and Parliamentary Representation in Hungary (1848–1914)* (Peter Lang, 2017) and Judit Pál, Vlad Popovici (eds.), *Elites and Politics in Central and Eastern Europe 1848–1918* (Peter Lang, 2014).

origins.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, historians have paid particular attention to the necessity of employing an empirical approach since it is difficult to emphasize the homogeneity of individuals obtaining burgher rights in the towns. It is also not possible to draw any general conclusions from the particular relations of the late phase of estate societies through the application of purely statistical methods. Therefore, recent research has suggested a different approach that is the utilization of a diverse selection of methodological tools. The reason for such a method lies in the complexity and diversity of the urban society of the first part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in particular the personal-familial relations, marriage customs, and economic network of such a community. In light of this complexity, this study adopts a prosopographical approach and is predominantly based on family-based nominal record linkage, using all the contemporaneous (or near contemporaneous) sources to the individuals (voting lists, census records, baptism, marriage, burial records, religion, occupation, habitation). Distinctions are made between a connubial indicator (father-in-law, brother-in-law) and primary familial relation (father, son, brother). In case the family was indigenous, vertical (grandparent, parent, and child) relations can be modelled retroactively onto more generations. The crucial contribution of using a database system is that it enables complex genealogical structures to be modelled and allows for analysis of typical cases illustrated by the families, in detail. In addition to this, changes in or permanence of relationships among representatives will be a relevant question in the old-new elite approach.

## Urban hierarchy of the Age of Reform

Initially, we must turn our attention to the terminological problems in connection with the towns and the burghers. Although the urban population continually increased numerically, the number of burghers as a proportion of the urban population decreased in all towns from the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, at this time a burgher is identified as such only if they held a burgher right in the free royal towns (“civitas”). However, from the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the settlements that were considered towns in legal terms, such

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<sup>2</sup> For the most recent academic literature on this topic see Árpád Tóth, *Polgári stratégiák. Életutak, családi sorsok és társadalmi viszonyok Pozsonyban 1780 és 1848 között*. [Strategy of the Burghers. Career Path, Families, and Social Conditions in Bratislava between 1780 and 1848] (Pozsony: Kalligram, 2009); Gábor Czoch, „A városok szíverei”. *Tanulmányok Kassáról és a reformkori városokról*. [Essays from Košice and from the Town at the Reform Age] (Pozsony: Kalligram, 2009); Vera Bácskai, „A régi polgárságról” [On the old Burghers], in *Zsombékok. Középosztályok és iskoláztatás Magyarországon* [Tussocks. Middle Classes and Schooling in Hungary], ed. György Kövér (Budapest: Századvég Kiadó, 2006), 15–37.; Gábor Gyáni, *Az urbanizáció társadalomtörténete*. [Social History of Urbanization] (Kölszvár: Korunk, 2012), 67–87.

as the free royal towns, increasingly differed from the settlements that had actual central functions and those with large populations. In Hungary, based on the 1828 census, a quantitative analysis of the urban system reveals a contrast between the settlements as a result of legal status and market functions because half of the free royal towns (22 in 57) that enjoyed parliamentary rights did not meet the criteria for a city as determined by Vera Bácskai.<sup>3</sup> In connection with this, the academic literature emphasizes the territorial rearrangement in which the economic activity gradually relocated from the borders of the country to the center.<sup>4</sup> The transformation of the town network had a wider adverse impact on the exclusive role of the free royal town in the urban hierarchy. These developments indicated that the significance of the free royal town decreased, and market towns became more important in the town hierarchy. On the other hand, as a result of these developments burgher rights underwent a comprehensive change and the descriptions of those who qualified as burghers changed during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>5</sup> Besides free royal towns, significant episcopal market towns (“oppidum”) also developed the administration procedural order (burgher right, payment of its fee) in order to identify themselves as a burgher.<sup>6</sup> Thus, the inhabitants of these towns with broader municipal rights referred to themselves as real burghers in the same way as those in free royal towns in the feudal sense with the same behavioral characteristics. In these towns they could become a burgher but were under the authority of a landlord so their real legal status was “zsellér” (Zinsbauer). The same process took place in Pápa, Szombathely and Nagykanizsa as these towns had the same legal position in the urban hierarchy as Eger.

The focus of this research, the town of Eger, provides a good local case study from which to examine these developments. Although this town did not enjoy free royal town

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<sup>3</sup> Vera Bácskai, *Városok és városi társadalom Magyarországon a XIX. század elején*. [Towns and Urban Society in Early Nineteenth-century Hungary], (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1988). The definition of towns underwent a remarkable interpretation from the 1960s. Before this decade, Hungarian historiography only recognised free royal towns as towns even if this legal category was somewhat inflexible. Then, the reconstruction of the urban hierarchy began to be based on the functional aspect highlighting the connection of the town and its region and its central functions. This reconstruction was begun by Vera Bácskai, Lajos Nagy, and Sándor Gyimesi.

<sup>4</sup> Vera Bácskai – Lajos Nagy, *Piackörzetek, piacközpontok és városok Magyarországon 1828-ban*. [Market Areas, Market Centers and Towns in Hungary in 1828] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1984); Gábor Czoch - Gábor Szabó - László Zsinka, *Változások a magyar város- és településrendszerben 1784 és 1910 között*. [Changing Tendencies in the Hungarian Urban Hierarchy between 1784 and 1910] Aetas 8, no. 4 (1993): 113–133.

<sup>5</sup> Bácskai, „A régi polgárságról,” 15–37.

<sup>6</sup> Basically, we can distinguish three types of settlement before 1848 in Hungary: free royal town, market town, and village.

status, it was the seventh most densely populated town in the country and was ranked forty-sixth by function.<sup>7</sup> The population was around 17,000 by the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and scarcely increased until the 1850s, when nearly 19,000 individuals were listed in the town. Being an episcopal market town, there was a constant effort to attain free royal town status and the legal recognition of town duties. But these efforts failed since many nobles were opposed to increasing the number of enfranchised towns. Consequently, the burghers in Eger were not considered “genuine” burghers like those in free royal towns despite having almost the same privileges in urban life. They wished to increase their social prestige in the town and to mitigate their weakening economic position by insisting on their privileges. In short, like their counterparts in the free royal towns, they attempted to prevent the weakening of burgher rights.

In light of the above, it is timely to outline what privileges were available for those with burgher rights. Why did one part of society aspire to acquire such a right? Overall, the burgher rights in the market towns granted privileges only to those living within urban society. The conditions imposed for acquiring the right were significant: from the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the fee for acquiring burgher rights grew larger every year. In addition, the applicants had to be proposed by a current rights holder and be in possession of house in the inner town. The son of a householder who had previously held the burgher right in the same town received special dispensation as their fee was reduced. Nonetheless, acquiring the burgher right insured economic and political rights within the town.

Before 1848 only the free royal towns had the right of representation in the Diet which allowed them to send one envoy. They had autonomy in local matters but this power was centered upon the narrow circle of individuals with burgher rights and they were identified as holding an exclusive role in urban governance. Their power was exercised by the main magistrate and 12 councillors. Alongside them, the 60-membered elected community—the outer councillors (*electa communitas*) represented the burghers. Local administration and the structure of local government was almost identical in the market towns under county or landlord authority as in the free royal towns and they were entitled to propose officials and a judge for election but the final decision in the nomination was made by the landlord. Their autonomy depended on the contract concluded by the landlord. Their general protection of interest and enforcement of their rights depended

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<sup>7</sup> If we examine Eger in the hierarchy of the urban network in a legal sense the role of the town was the most significant at the time. Its importance lessened until the turn of the century due to a lack of development in infrastructure (strong industry, major railway networks). Pál Beluszky–Róbert Győri, *Magyar városhálózat a 20. század elején*. [Hungarian Urban Network at the Beginning of Twentieth century], (Budapest–Pécs: Dialóg Campus, 2005), 152.

on how the inhabitants reacted to them. What follows, then, is a description of the sociological characteristics of the burghers from the perspective of those burghers who take these privileges considerable.

## Sociological characteristics of the burghers

There is another issue that requires examination before analyzing the social composition of the burghers: the proportion of individuals with newly received burgher rights compared with the overall population of the town. According to the census data of 1787, the number of individuals who were registered as burghers was 553.<sup>8</sup> The proportion of burghers living in the town did not increase significantly until 1828 when their number was 650.<sup>9</sup> The spatial distribution of the burghers in the town of 1828 was as follows: from the total inner town's head of households (numerically 1,003), 424 householders (23%) obtained burgher rights and from the periphery of the inner town (numerically 3,414), only 226 householders (4%) were registered. It seems clear from the data that as a percentage of the town's population, those with burgher rights was fairly low as only 3 percent were entitled.<sup>10</sup> Considering the list of burghers in the examined period there is further information about the number of burghers after the year of 1828, too.<sup>11</sup> This list of burghers was made retrospectively in the year 1828, and includes the name of burghers, their trades and the date of the council decision on their burgher right. Consequently, we can trace the precise number of burghers after that year too: approximately 204 new burghers were listed between 1825 and 1840. Overall, comparing this data originating from the same period (between 1780 and 1840) with Szombathely, a town with similar legal status, the number of burghers (810 burghers) surpassed that of Eger. The

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<sup>8</sup> National Archives of Hungary-Archive of Eger IV-34/1 Népszámlálások (1786–1844) Eger város házakát és famíliákat egybefoglaló II. József-kori népszámlálás.

<sup>9</sup> National Archives of Hungary-Archive of Eger IV-7/a/9. *Conscriptio Regnicolarie Archi Eppalis Civitatis Agriensis*.

<sup>10</sup> The whole population of the town in 1787 was 16,770 which slowly increased until 1828, at that time approximately 17,487 individual were registered.

<sup>11</sup> National Archives of Hungary-Archive of Eger V-2/a/1. k Egri polgárjogot nyert egyének betűrendes jegyzéke [Burgher list of the town of Eger in alphabetical order].

same trend can be witnessed in Pápa where 992 individuals became burghers in 1828.<sup>12</sup> Regarding this social composition, the most striking point is that individuals who gained burgher rights can be identified as traditional master artisans who were involved with their guild organizations. Merchants as well as the educated did not consider it important and therefore did not aspire to acquiring burgher rights (only one notary and a pharmacist obtained burgher right in the period under examination). As is witnessed from the evidence, bootmakers represented one-third (187 individuals, 27%), furriers 15% (98 individuals) and tailors 14% (96 individuals) of those who sought to obtain the burgher right.<sup>13</sup> It is important to bear in mind that obtaining the burgher right for such craftsmen was essential as it provided them with the possibility of becoming involved in the guild organizations and to practice their trade in this way.

It is necessary now to scrutinize the issue of the origins of burghers as this could prove a valuable source in determining the functional significance of the burgher right. There exists data on the place of birth of 196 of the burghers.<sup>14</sup> In this analysis in the first three decades (between 1797 and 1828) 28% of the burghers can be considered as newcomers, not local (20 out of 78); subsequently this rate increased: 37 out of 177, which consisted of only 20% of the newcomers burghers between 1828 and 1840. In the meantime, it signified at the other part 74 - 68 percent of individuals among the local burghers in the whole period. Considering also the geographical aspect, the newcomers had their origins in the surrounding counties, occasionally from the same county an indication of the significant role the town played within the region. Recent research has highlighted the importance of the burgher right and that its attraction was dependent on the local context. This may be attributed to the fact that one part of society aspired to acquire the burgher right in order to maintain their social prestige in the given community resulting in a tight attachment to the urban level. On the other hand, another subgroup of burghers, mainly the newcomers, exploited these privileges to integrate and ensure a commitment to the town. Acting upon this approach, a closer examination of the social description

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<sup>12</sup> József Hudi, "Pápa szabadalmas mezőváros polgársága a 18–19. században," [Burghers in the Privileged Market Town of Pápa in the 18–19th Centuries] In: Á. Varga László (Ed.): *Vera (nem csak) a városban*. [Vera (not only) in a town] (Debrecen, 1995), 95–106. and György Tilcsik, "Adatok Kőszeg és Szombathely polgárságának etnikai összetételéhez a 19. század első felében," [Ethnical Composition of the Burghers of the Town of Kőszeg and Szombathely] In: *Előadások Vas megye történetéről* [Essays about the History of Vas County] 4. László Mayer (Ed.) (Szombathely, 2004) 129–169.

<sup>13</sup> According to the tax census of 1828 we can summarize the following occupational composition of the town: 608 master artisans, 36 traders, 60 intellectuals and the large majority were vintagers and got involved to the agriculture.

<sup>14</sup> This rather small number of elements call us for caution however when comparison with the other elements, the tendency points to the same trend.

and the burghers' origins show that this segment of the urban society was socially closed. The reason for this can be found in fact that the rate of population growth slowed from the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century because of the ongoing diminishing role of trade. This economic decline was somewhat counterbalanced by the central role played by Eger in the county and the Church. It can be attributed to the fact that the local burghers made efforts to retain their privileges against those individuals moving into the town from elsewhere (who had no intention of claiming burgher rights anyway). Taking these sociological characteristics of the burghers into account, what follows is an analysis of the opportunities that remained open to them for participating in local government after 1848, or whether this was their intention at all.

## Reorganization of the local administration

Though many significant changes took place after the revolutionary period of 1848/49, the local government and the local administration were set aside. The Hungarian Parliament only reconvened again on April 6th, 1861, after the period of absolutism. As a result, the urban government were again also permitted to elect representatives. Subsequently, the next election was held in the year 1867. After the Compromise, the statutes concerning the regulation pertaining to municipal government were enacted in 1870 by Act XLII and in 1871 by Act XVIII. In this process the autonomy of the municipalities was reduced and of local government as well as the basis for their independent political role. This meant that the state had the right to supervise and discipline municipal administrations and to promote governmental aims through the "főispán" (Lord Lieutenant) of the counties whose authority was based on personal loyalty to the government. However, municipal governments maintained their significance in the regulation of local government. Besides introducing the authority of the Lord Lieutenant, another drawback was the leading in the list of "virilis" (the highest taxpayers) which adversely affected the traditional urban elite participating in urban government.<sup>15</sup> With the rise of broader political participation through the course of the 19th century, education and wealth gained a central role while the circulation of elite positions was accelerated.<sup>16</sup> Members were elected for six years and every three years, half of the members completed their term but had the opportunity to be re-elected for another six-year term. Half of the local government held

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<sup>15</sup> István Kajtár, *Magyar városi önkormányzatok* (1848–1918), [Hungarian Local Government (1848–1918)] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1992).

<sup>16</sup> Gábor Gyáni, "Az elit fogalma és történeti változékonysága, " [Definition of Elite and Its Variability] *Korunk*, 20, no. 3 (2009): 3–9.



their positions due to their wealth whereas the other 50% was elected. In the following section I attempt to determine the continuity between 1848 and 1872 since after this period, voting rights altered considerably (after 1874).<sup>1</sup>

Thus, we must turn our attention to the suffrage, one of the key elements in participation at the level of local government. With the Revolution in 1848, a considerably wider suffrage based on liberal principles was introduced. The first suffrage legislation, Act V of 1848 on suffrage, clearly defined the framework of parliamentary voting rights as well as membership of the urban government. This act was only emended by Act XXXIII of 1874 and remained in place until the First World War.<sup>2</sup> The extension of voting rights brought considerable changes nationwide creating the possibility of policy making at the local level, too. Individuals could vote if over 20 years of age and if they fulfilled one of the minimum requirements of the census: property, trade, education, income, or old law. Political rights, which were restricted to the burghers of the city and burgher rights were transformed into census. Those individuals who formerly had the suffrage in the feudal representation (nobles) retained it, regardless of whether they met the condition of the newly formed census or not. At the same time, Act V ensured suffrage—namely “old law”—to the burghers of privileged settlements. Though this legal regulation did not apply in the market-episcopal towns, in the case of Eger a substantial number of electors were entitled to vote under the old law. Even though they were not considered to be a privileged social group in the feudal sense, they behaved as the burghers in the free royal towns. In this way, the gradual loss of power of the traditional families was a somewhat long drawn-out process due to their maintaining their right to vote. Detailed research on this topic in the case of Kassa shows that a radical change in personnel did not occur, a high proportion of individuals who gained the suffrage, almost 70 percent, were in possession of burgher rights.<sup>3</sup> Thus, a high proportion of burghers in Kassa could take part

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<sup>1</sup> For the detailed analysis of these different legal regulation of the voting right see József Pap, “A városi képviselet, városi képviselők a dualizmus időszakában,” [Town Representation, Town Representatives During the Time of Dualism] In: *Városi érdekvédelem a rendi és polgári parlamentarizmus időszakában*. [Protection of Town Interests During the Time of Feudal and Parliamentarism] Eds. Péter Kónya – H. Németh István. (Presov, 2016).

<sup>2</sup> However, in 1913, there was an effort to adopt the new law on suffrage but that process did not occur and the proportion of electors did not change throughout the Age of Dualism. For debates on the electoral extension and its appearance in the local context, in the case of Eger in 1913 see József Pap, “A választójog kiterjesztése körül folyó vita és az egeri közélet a huszadik század elején,” [Debate about the extension of the suffrage and public life in Eger at the beginning of the 20th century] In: Ballabás Dániel (ed.) *Trianon 90 év távolából*. (Eger: Líceum Kiadó, 2011) 68–95.

<sup>3</sup> Gábor Czoch, “Városi tisztújítás Kassán 1848-ban,” [Urban Re-election in Kassa in 1848] *Századok* 149, no. 5 (2015): 1113–35.

in the work of urban government after 1848. At this point, it is necessary to consider those individuals who not only had the vote but could also stand for election. Studying the early electoral register, the conclusion can be drawn that in 1848, 2,062 individuals gained the suffrage in the town and the possibility to participate in urban politics. Individual eligibility based on old law constituted the second largest group of electors (225) in the town (also including the nobles). However, their number gradually decreased: in 1848 only 181 individuals had the right to vote under old law thanks to their burgher rights while in 1869 this number had fallen to 34. The high proportion of individuals therefore who remained among the electors under old law in the next election were entitled to vote due to their noble privileges. There are two major reasons for this: on the one hand, in the case of the 1860 electoral register, the census takers applied this old law category more consistently. In this sense, the number of individuals who got the vote thanks to their previous burgher rights decreased suddenly.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, it is also noteworthy that the average age when individuals could afford to obtain the burgher right was between 24 and 28. However, in the case of Kassa (free royal town) the average age of the burghers was between 35 and 43.<sup>5</sup> This difference between the two towns can be located in the fact that the burghers of Eger appealed for their rights as burghers at the same time they were involved in their guild organizations. Although, the age of death for the majority of Eger's burghers is unknown, it seems logical from the above data that the high mortality rate was an important factor and it can be assumed that it was one of the main reasons why they were not able to retain their voting rights. Therefore, this continuity is worth examining from another perspective.<sup>6</sup>

The relationship between the structure of the entire urban population and the electoral register can be examined with the support of the population census. According to the census data of 1857, the population of the town was 17,688<sup>7</sup> and from among them 11% had the suffrage in 1848. This rate was fairly high in comparison with the census rate nationwide as that rate scarcely exceeded 6%.<sup>8</sup> In 1872, 19,150<sup>9</sup> were listed in the town

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<sup>4</sup> For detailed examination on this process in connection with that town see József Pap, "Eger választópolgárai a 19. század közepén," [Voters of Eger in the Middle of 19<sup>th</sup> century] *Történelmi Szemle* 58, no. 1 (2016): 149–164.

<sup>5</sup> Czoch, "A városok szíverek". *Tanulmányok Kassáról és a reformkori városokról*, 185–197.

<sup>6</sup> With regard to the continuity of the parliamentary representatives in this early period see József Pap, "Az első népképviselők és a népképviselő kezdetei Magyarországon," *AETAS*, 31, no. 1 (2016): 21–44.

<sup>7</sup> National Archives of Hungary-Archive of Eger V-44/c 5.

<sup>8</sup> Andor Csizmadia, *A magyar választási rendszer 1848–1849-ben*. [Electoral System in 1848–1849] (Budapest: Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó, 1963).

<sup>9</sup> Hungarian Statistical Yearbook. 1912. 53.

and more than 2,000 inhabitants were eligible to enter urban government, 10 % of the population.<sup>10</sup> According to the census data of 1857, of the proportion of individuals who were registered from the population census due to their owning property, 81% were entitled to vote under any census in 1848. This rate among the intellectuals (96 individuals) and master artisans (133 individuals) was only 18% compared to the whole population. While the proportion of those who were entitled to vote because of property ownership decreased compared to the data from 1848, until this point we can observe a constant increase in the list of electors receiving suffrage based on their education and their trade. It seems apparent from the data of the altered census of the electoral register that the social character of the urban population was changing and was accompanied by the altered circle of probable representatives. Nevertheless, the proportion of individuals with newly received suffrage remained stable throughout the period under examination. Moreover, it must be borne in mind that only those electors were included on the voting list who chose to register to vote until the Act XXXIII of 1874. After this, it became an administrative role and it took place every year not only before the elections.<sup>11</sup> The following table demonstrates the different censuses and the proportion of individuals with newly received suffrage during the examined period.

Year	Property	Industry	Income	Trade	Education	Old law	Total
1848	1,442	133	152	12	96	225	2,062
1860	894	267	9	-	82	27	1,279
1869	1,436	167	8	29	171	218	2,029
1901	845	-	710	-	217	10	1,782

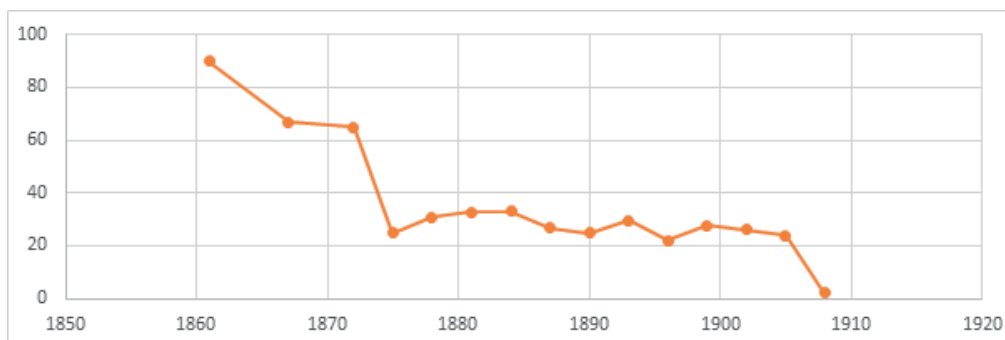
Examining the census during this period is revealing as it is the census that determined the social composition of the urban government and the recruitment base for the urban elite. In attempting to describe the social composition of those individuals intending to participate, it becomes clear that it effectively corresponds to the same social groups' efforts. Professionals dominated in number and maintained a steady presence throughout the examined period. They represented one-third (26%) of the total positions in the initial period and their participation was based on their awareness in the town. Their rate exceeded 35 percent by the end of the period. Among them, those in the legal profession dominated reflecting the county character of the town and a consistent increase in their numbers can be observed: from 14 percent at the beginning of the 50s to 23 percent

<sup>10</sup> National Archives of Hungary-Archive of Eger IV-254/5. 1869.

<sup>11</sup> Magyar törvénytár. [Hungarian code of laws] 1874. XXXIII. 36. §.

by the end of the 60s. Among the professionals, there were only one or two members from the medical profession and the proportion of pharmacists was not noteworthy but still representative. Another identifiable cohort consisted of the master artisans as their representatives were present in the highest proportion among the groups. Craftsmen made up 45% at the beginning of the period displaying a slight decrease over the next few years: from 43 individuals to 35. Another interesting change in comparison with the beginning of era was that the number of vintagers increased slightly, from 15 individuals to 26. The tradesmen were unable to keep their positions as their representatives varied in number and by the end of the period only 3 individuals were represented. The reasons for this can be found in the fact that the traders had little commitment to the town due to their relatively transient business. The verifiable differences in occupational structure among the members became ever more visible, signalling a considerable shift from the beginning of the years of 1850.

On the basis of the above, it is possible to analyze how the social composition of the urban government impacts on the rate of fluctuation as the number of elected members was numerically quite large and based on my database, 244 individuals can be studied between 1848 and 1872. The fluctuation in representatives can be demonstrated by examining the proportion of new representatives, if we assess the issue of how often the same representatives appeared repeatedly. The first striking aspect is that after the year 1872 signs of stabilization can be witnessed, although the new voting law (accepted and introduced in 1874) slightly reduced the number of people who were entitled to vote. The following chart demonstrates this personal continuity throughout the examined period.



As illustrated in the chart, the number of newly entered individuals occupied more than half of the entire government between 1861 and 1872, signalling a destabilization throughout this period. Therefore, it has to be taken into consideration how these representatives were impacted on by the newly introducing the list of the highest taxpayers in the year of 1872. Since only 25 previously elected individuals were from among the highest taxpayers and 31 previously elected individuals were among the newly elected

members, it is clear how significantly this new regulation changed the composition of the urban government, affecting adversely the participation of the traditional urban elite in the local government.

Returning to the primary research question, the real question is to what extent the burghers could maintain their positions in this urban context. In attempting to answer this question, it is necessary to attempt to describe their kinship networks. Based on the nominal-record linkage database, it is intended to examine the question of what happened to those householders and families who were less able to stabilize their positions in the local government after 1848. Examining the causes for this inability to preserve their position, two categories of burgher can be posited. The circle of “old burghers” who obtained the right to vote under any census can serve as a basis for this categorization. In the first, the burghers won the right to vote after 1848 and represented their families at the beginning of the period and two decades later he or, later, his descendants continued to participate in local government. They represented both individual and family continuity. The greatest chance of acquiring the right to vote was for those who were able to validate their right to vote from the census of old law into the census of property or trade. On the other hand, relationships were maintained through marriage and kinship links enabling the representatives to pursue a consistent local policy and strategies over an extended period. It also seems possible that they used these connections as a conscious strategy to reinforce their positions. These connections were underpinned through family trees.

Based on this approach, 14 families were classified as belonging to this category. Elder József Komáromy (born in 1800) was registered as a furrier and became a burgher in 1828. He was entitled to vote in 1848 under the old law but at the next election he was eligible under the property-based census, thus could participate in the urban government in 1861, too. Then, his son, younger József (born in 1834) working within the same profession, was eligible to vote thanks to his trade and after the death of his father, he inherited the family's inner-city house. It enabled him to acquire the right to vote and to maintain his position in the local government for almost 30 years (1861–1890). Ferenc Glósz (1796–1870) was born in Eger and became a burgher as a button maker in his twenties. Then, he earned the right to vote owing to his burgher rights under the old law and his inner-city house. Presumably, he left his trade because he was later registered as a tradesman and vineyard owner and he received suffrage under the property census due to his new profession. His son, Károly (born in 1836) trained as a baker and was entitled to be elected due to property ownership and thanks to his inheriting the inner-city house and vineyards. Ferenc Ruzsin (1793–1874) was eligible for burgher rights as a tanner and received the suffrage under the old law. It appears he abandoned his trade since he was later registered as a vineyard owner, too. He played a role in the government in 1861, 1867, and

1872. After his election, at the age of 81, he died. His son, Bódog (born in 1836) worked as a baker and was elected the same year as his father. However, after 1872 he was a civil servant in the town. Elder Károly Károly (born in 1810) became a burgher as a tailor in 1835 and was elected in 1848 and 1861. His eldest son, Károly (born in 1838) was entitled to vote due to his occupation as a bookbinder and at the age of 37 was elected throughout the next 12 years (1875–1887). His nephew, János Béla (born in 1869) trained as a ginger-bread maker, played a role in the urban political life at the same age of 37 (1905–1911).

The following examples display a similar trend. Elder József Balkay (born in 1820) became a burgher as a master carpenter in his twenties and won the right to vote owing to his trade and his ownership of an inner city-house. He was elected as a representative in 1861 and 1867, and later was registered at the town hall as a civil servant. He was added to the electoral register thanks to his occupation and his inner-town property. He married Teréz Boma, the daughter of a well-known gunsmith and a holder of burger rights and they had three children: a locksmith István (1855–1931), who owned an inner-city house due to his wife's inheritance, was elected and was able to maintain this role from 1893; a baker Béla (1862–1925), who was a new member in 1905 at the age of 43, and their younger brother, József (born in 1850), who was the only child who pursued the same occupation as their father (carpenter) and he held membership too. He went on to marry the daughter of József Urbán, who was also a well-known master artisan in the town.

János Miticzky (1806–1886) was born in Eger and became a burgher as a tailor. He acquired the right to vote as a result of his owning an inner-city house and his work in trade. He was an elected member until his death. Though his eldest son, József (born in 1838), did not inherit the inner-city house, he continued his father's trade, procuring the right to vote due to that. His marriage to Mária Urbán, the daughter of a well-known tailor and member of the local government, implies that marriage among those practising the same trade was influential and was reinforced by their election. It also enabled him to maintain his position in local government for 35 years (1867–1902). His elder sister, Teréz, inherited the house and she married a master blacksmith, Sámuel Elek, who was also born in the city in 1859 and who also became an elected member (1890–1908). His younger sister, Mária's (born in 1840) marriage displays a similar pattern: her husband, Sándor Morvay (born in 1831) was born in the same town and became an elected member (1878–1886).

Within the other category, a significant proportion of the individuals represented themselves in only one or two elections, as many died due to their advanced age. It must be noted that losing the right to vote or a lack of descendants was an important factor in the disappearance of these individuals/families. For instance, József Leszkovszki was registered as a carpenter and burgher in 1828. He was entitled to vote in 1848 under the old

law and the property-based census. Despite his participation in the urban government of 1848, he lost his vote, although still alive. Then, his son, Mihály (18?–1892) working with-in the same profession, represented the family from 1872 but after 1881 his age barred him from re-election. Antal Árvay (1790–1859) applied for burgher rights in his twenties, and was registered by the census takers in 1848, meaning that he was not able to meet the minimum census requirements. He did not live to see the next election and his inner-town house was inherited by his daughter, Katalin, with her husband. A gingerbread-maker, Fülöp Hoffmann (born in 1795), acquired the right to vote due to his burgher rights, obtained in 1828. He was still alive in 1867, but after the 1850s, he does not appear on the electoral lists leading to him also losing the right to participate in urban government.

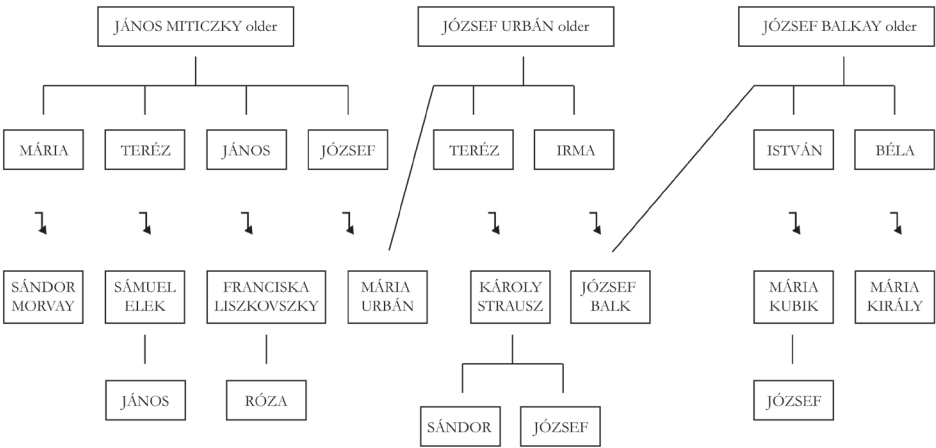
## Conclusion

Based on the statistical data, considerable divergence among the individuals who were entitled to vote under any census throughout the period under examination can be observed. The transformed circle of electors was accompanied by a relatively high rate of fluctuation and frequency of new representatives. As the proportion of individuals with lengthy service was low, it is possible to infer a change concerning the social composition. Thus, the local government went through a noteworthy transformation during this period. On the other hand, based on the statistical data, a high continuity among the old traditional elite, who intended to apply for the right to vote cannot be established. As previously mentioned, these families' presence in the urban government was increasingly small which was caused by the changes in participating representatives' social composition. This local government transformation had a negative impact on the traditional urban elite. However, some continuity can be observed due to their descendants and, despite the high fluctuation rate, a strong familial permanence can be observed.

It seems that this group, the master artisans, represented the traditional local elite as the majority were descendants or close relatives of established, traditional families whose members maintained their positions in the local government in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century through their prestige. Thus, it cannot be ascertained that members of the urban government in the second half of the century in Eger were new settlers or "homo novus". Close analysis of the members showed that the majority were born locally. Therefore, they were established and accepted members of the community. Those who were born in Eger were given preference, however the new arrivals were not entirely excluded from becoming members of the local authorities. A closer look at the kinship network of craftsmen showed that their relatives were engaged in the same trade. There was a typical father-son succession among artisans, but typically only one son followed the father's



trade while the others turned to other trades. This family relations-based network resulted in a fragmented society partly owing to the nature of marriages and it is also determined by these family strategies if these interlinking marriages are defined as “survival strategies.” Though, the network analysis links the elite to the institutional framework in which it functions, it must be borne in mind that examining one aspect, such as in this case the operation of kinship networks in the institutional background, is not sufficient for the understanding of these networks. That is why attention ought to be paid to the micro-analytical level to reveal how decisions, choices, behaviors of individuals are conditioned in practice and how the conflict between the families and the local community operated. Such findings would also be helpful in highlighting the functioning and workings of local politics.





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